

The Keynote

Newsletter of FISTS CW Club • The International Morse Preservation Society
Issue 1, 2011

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Are Morse Code
Classes Extinct?

Selling FISTS to a
Ham Radio Club

CW: The DXer's
Valuable Tool

John Shannon, K3WWP
Keynote Columnist



"When You've Worked a FISTS, You've Worked a Friend"

When you have a question about FISTS, go to the source for the correct answer. Posting a question on a chat room or email reflector may result in a lot of opinions, but your best bet is to ask a FISTS volunteer or look in the reference issue.

Please put the word 'FISTS' somewhere in the title of your email. This will help the volunteer recognize that your email is important and not spam.

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Irene has no email capability. Some shirt sizes are sold out - check web page.**

All other questions, including supplies, tapes for the blind, callsign/email/ postal address changes, (NO we do not get this info directly from the FCC!) general membership questions and articles for the Keynote contact Nancy Kott WZ8C, nancy@tir.com; PO Box 47, Hadley MI 48440, phone 810-797-2033, fax 810-797-5808. Please check your label for your renewal month/year - dues are \$15/year. Payable to FISTS CW Club or paypal to fists@tir.com.

FISTS CW CLUB

The International Morse Preservation Society



"When You've Worked a FIST, You've Worked a Friend"

North American Memo • Issue 1, 2011

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Hi FISTS,

I hope you like the new look of the Keynote! This month we feature FISTS volunteer John Shannon, K3WWP, on the front cover and his key collection on the back cover. John is holding a homebrew key that he made for one of the NAQCC homebrew straight-key sprints a couple years ago. The cover photo was taken by Mike KC2EGL.

John has been writing a column for the Keynote for about 85 issues, which is no small feat. He's never missed a month — if his column was missing from an issue, it was my fault. Thanks, John!

Thanks to all who have sent in "extras" for the fire restoration fund. I was very surprised and overwhelmed, and it was much appreciated. Things are finally settling down and we're almost moved back in to the FISTS HQ. I want to put a little station in there so people stopping by the area can operate (it's not W1AW by any means, hi hi), but it will have to wait until spring, and after seeing what type of antenna the landlord will let us put up. I can't have a tower, but there are some big trees nearby. We'll see!

As always, I need your stories for the Keynote. I miss not having chatty notes to include, altho make no mistake, the articles are wonderful, too. Drop me a note when something FISTS or CW related happens, so I can share it with the membership.

If you've ordered a shirt or other supplies and haven't received them, please let me know. I set several orders aside until I had a chance to go through what survived the fire and may have misplaced the orders.

We will need help again this year at the FISTS booth at Hamvention. Please drop me an email if you are able to be at the booth for a couple hours so we can take breaks (nancy@tir.com). It's a lot of fun and not THAT much work!

—73 88 33, Nancy Kott WZ8C

WELCOME TO THE NEW FISTS

Number	Callsign	First	QTH	Sponsor	Number	Callsign	First	QTH	Sponsor
15341	W1AKN	Jack	MA		15376	AD5US	TIM	TX	
15342	W2IY	MICHAEL	NJ		15377	KD8HOK	VERNON	MI	
15343	KM6HB	MARK	CA		15378	N5HDX	JOE	TX	
15344	VE2CW	Donald	QC		15379	K2LS	Larry	NC	
15345	N5NZ	GARY	TX		15380	K2VCS	Vicki	NC	
15346	KM7Q	BOB	OR		15381	WB2REI	Scott	NJ	K2FW
15347	VE6TEP	TERRY	AB		15382	W0LX	Craig	MO	
15348	NS3F	SPENCE	DE		15383	N6NUL	BYRON	CA	AE6RF
15349	KE3W	NEVINS	PA		15384	WG0K	DAVE	NE	
15350	K2QS	QSY Society	NY	WA2WMJ	15385	N8XMS	Paul	MI	K3WWP
15351	K1ITS	KURT	MA		15386	K8JJC	PAUL	MI	
15352	KD3AF	JERRY	FL		15387	K1KKT	KEN	CT	W1HED
15353	KI4TWB	MIKE	AL		15388	WB4NIU	JIM	VT	
15354	W2ZRA	KEVIN	NY		15389	K6WFB	DEBRA	CA	WY6M
15355	NY4G	Ariel	SC		15390	W4IIC	CHARLIE	TN	
15356	W3OKC	STEVE	PA		15391	VE3MDX	DAVID	ON	
15357	K5IID	TOM	TX		15392	VE3AV	DAVE	ON	
15358	W7SRM	STEVE	OR		15393	W7RAW	RUS	WA	
15359	N2JDQ	Steve	NY		15394	N8WL	Steven	OH	
15360	KB5SXC	LEO	TX		15395	WD6AJW	David	TX	
15361	WD8AFB	Keith	FL		15396	AI4C	BILL	FL	
15362	KI6OEA	Sarah	CA		15397	KC2NYU	Paul	GA	
15363	KA5VZG	Alan	TN	KA8HFN	15398	K5DNA	LARRY	AR	
15364	KJ6CST	BRUCE	CA		15399	WA0CRI	DOUG	MN	
15365	W5TB	NORTEX QRP	TX	KK5NA	15401	W0NWG	JOHN	MO	
15366	W0HNI	BILL	CO		15402	W5TTW	PAUL		
15367	W4CZJ	Michael	NC		15403	KC5GB	GB	TX	
15368	VE7AUL	BRIAN	BC		15404	N3ADF	Jim	MD	
15369	KM6XO	JOHN	CA		15405	W4HH	Joe	VA	
15370	NZ6P	MICHAEL	CA		15406	KJ4VPK	Christian		
15371	K5LY	LEE	TX		15407	KJ6LKP	Carol	CA	
15372	KJ6KFQ	SIDNEY	CA	AJ6B	15408	KD0JCX	Nancy	IA	
15373	VE7CJF	KEN	BC		15409	N8ZSG	GEORGE	MI	
15374	WA4FYN	TOM	AL		15410	K8JER	Jonathan	MI	
15375	AK5D	Mimbres Valley Radio Club	NM	KW7D	15411	VE1PVH	Paul	NS	
					15412	K3MRK	MARK		

QRP WITH K3WWP

by John K3WWP

A little background on this column first. Because of the long interruption in the publication of the Keynote due to problems that are well documented now, this is a condensed version of what was originally intended to be a multi-part column so it is a bit long. Part I was published so long ago that Nancy thought it would be a good idea to publish the whole multi-part column including Part I in this issue. Some material may be a bit dated now. I'll make no effort to update it here, but will have an update on some things in my next column. So here we go.

Back on August 4, 2009 my streak of making at least one QRP CW QSO per day reached the 15 year mark or 5,479 consecutive days (on January 7, 2011 it will be 6,000 days). At that time I presented an interview about the streak in my web site (<http://home.windstream.net/johnshan/>) diary.

The interviewers were hams who submitted questions about the streak. The first few questions were from local ham Tom WY3H, former newspaper reporter, good friend, and president of the NAQCC.

WY3H: How did you get started in ham radio and when?

K3WWP: It was back in the early 1960's when I tuned away

from our local Pittsburgh station KDKA on the AM BC band and heard WHO in Des Moines, IA. I thought it was wonderful you could hear a radio station from so far away. I tuned around some more and heard other distant AM stations. Then I wondered if I could get even more distant stations if I hooked up some kind of long wire antenna to the radio. I did so, connecting it to the tuning capacitor where I saw the internal loop antenna was connected. Not knowing much about radio at that time, perhaps I connected it to the oscillator section of the capacitor. Anyway, somehow that changed to tuning range of the radio and I heard Radio Switzerland as my first ever short wave station. After hearing other SW BC stations, then I heard this station with someone talking as if he was on the phone who identified himself as W3CYG.

I later found out he was a local amateur radio operator named Red Claypoole. I didn't think much about it at the time, but some time later a friend of mine, Larry Hooks, was showing off his CB radio to me, and mentioned he was going to get his amateur radio license. That sounded intriguing to me, so I decided to try to get my license also. Of course then you had to learn Morse Code to get all classes

of license except Technician. So he and I studied the code together, and I was immediately fascinated by it. When we were ready, Larry and I went to the aforementioned W3CYG to take our Novice exam. I remember that session as clearly as if it happened yesterday although it actually was 47 years ago now. Red was fooling around with the key sending a few letters just to let us get familiar with his sending and the sound of his code practice oscillator and to relax a bit. Suddenly I caught him sending R U READY? Larry didn't catch it, but I did and said I was ready. Red sent us the 5 WPM code test which we both passed, then gave us the written part of the test which we also both passed. The info was then sent off to the FCC, and in a couple weeks on April 3, 1963, Larry was KN3WWW and I was KN3WWP.

WY3H: How did you learn CW? What method did you use?

K3WWP: I honestly don't remember. It just more or less came to me like learning to talk as a baby. I listened to the W1AW code practice sessions, but that was more to increase my copying speed after I initially learned the code. Also the increase in speed just came naturally as well, and it wasn't too long before I worked

my way up to the point of getting the ARRL code proficiency awards through 35 words per minute. Unfortunately the dates on the little endorsement stickers on the award have faded away so I can't say exactly when I reached each speed level.

WY3H: You operate CW exclusively, why?

K3WWP: CW is an exact form of communication. A dot and dash sent together mean A — period. There aren't any variations of saying A as there are with voice. That's simplistic, perhaps, but I like exact things. I don't like change, so I found this exact mode of communication and stuck with it over the years. I also like CW because it requires something the other ham radio modes don't — mental exercise. You don't really have to use your brain to use voice on the ham bands, and you can tell that quickly by simply listening to some of the things that are on the voice portions of the ham bands. All the other digital modes use a computer or computer chip to do the thinking. Morse Code is the only mode that requires you to use your brain to interpret what is being said. I like that, as mental exercise is important in keeping a healthy brain.

WY3H: What is your favorite key? (straight key, Iambic, etc.)

K3WWP: Most of the time I use a CMOS Super Keyer Mark II that I built from a kit in the mid 1990's. The paddle that operates it is a Bencher that was given to me by my friend Mike KC2EGL a

couple years ago. Before that, the paddle was a homebrew one made from two straight keys mounted bottom to bottom and used upright in a standard paddle configuration. When I do use a straight key (in our NAQCC sprints, for example), my current favorites are two homebrew keys I made for use in our annual NAQCC homebrew key sprints each November. (NOTE: Since the original interview, I now also have a Vibroplex Lightning Bug courtesy of Larry W2LJ and a WinKeyer USB courtesy of KC2EGL which I use from time to time with the aforementioned keys.)

WY3H: Your current streak started 15 years ago, but just how?

K3WWP: My friend Eric KB3BFQ who used to live next door are sports fans and sports deals a lot with various kinds of streaks such as Lou Gehrig's 2130 consecutive games played streak subsequently broken by Cal Ripken who played 2632 games in a row before he missed a game. Eric and I wondered how streaks could be applied to ham radio and thought of the idea of seeing how many days in a row it would be possible to make a contact with my simple equipment. I still haven't found a definite answer other than to say it is at least 5,479 days and counting.

WY3H: What are some of the memorable events in the streak? Your most memorable QSOs for example.

K3WWP: That question could lead to writing a book since there

were many. One of my most memorable QSO's came just a few days ago when I worked Mirek

VK6DXI near Perth Australia which is just about as far away from Kittanning as you can get and still remain on Earth. I've worked Australia many times in the streak, but this QSO was on 40 meters and it came when the sun hadn't yet set here. Both Mirek and I are just about certain it was a long path grey path QSO which would mean my QRP signals travelled over 14,000 miles from here to there. Australia also figures in other memorable streak QSO's. I worked VH6HQ on 30M a couple times. The first time he answered my CQ, I figured it was a Canadian station when I heard the initial V, then after I got VK I thought he must be portable somewhere in North or South America.

However he was near Perth Australia. One of the times we worked, shortly after the QSO ended, my phone rang and when I answered, it was VK6HQ calling (VERY) long distance. He wanted to know a bit more about my setup here and we chatted for a few minutes. Another event was working Hawaii on 80 meters not once, but twice, and almost three times in this year's ARRL DX contest. What a thrill to hear KH6MB and a few minutes later KH6LC come back to my call. The QSO's were not all that difficult either. They did involve a few repeats of my info, but both were completed successfully. A further attempt with a third station didn't get beyond K3W??. A mini-

streak within the streak is memorable. From November 23, 1999 through February 11, 2000 I made at least one DX QSO each day. Then after missing a day, I started again on February 13 and continued through July 15th. The second streak was 154 days long which made 235 out of 236 days I worked some DX. More about the overall streak and the mini DX streak can be found on my web site. I must also mention my first Japanese QSO with JA3ZOH. It took a long time to get that first Japan QSO, but now I have around 180 or so. The first QSO with Asiatic Russia was also memorable, as were several DXpedition QSO's where I had to break big pileups to get the QSO, but I'd better quit here and let you ask your next question.

WY3H: Tell us about the web site.

K3WWP: It was initially started in 1996 to describe the history of how WA8EOH and I started the CW County Hunters Net back in 1966, and slowly evolved into a site that promotes the use of Morse Code and QRP on the ham bands with many features designed to encourage such use by showing examples of how efficient Morse is, even with my very minimal QRP and simple wire antennas setup. I think that seeing what I've done in contests, DXing, awards, the streak and so forth does encourage other hams to try Morse. In fact, I know it does because I've had countless hams mention that my site led them to (or back to) CW. I've had almost a half million vis-

its to the site over the 14 years of its existence.

WY3H: I think your readers would like to know a bit more about your professional work life. I know you worked in radio broadcasting. Tell us more about that?

K3WWP: Originally I had planned on a career in Astronomy, but got discouraged because of the very non-astronomical curriculum I had to take in college to even get close to working in Astronomy. I switched to a study of electronics at Gateway Tech in Pittsburgh thinking about a career in that field. While studying there it seemed a career in broadcast engineering would fit me very well. I got my commercial FCC First Class Radiotelephone License and after a very brief stint training for our local emergency operations center, my application to WPIT in Pittsburgh was accepted and I became an engineer there. My job eventually evolved to the point where I did just about everything at the station except being a salesman. I did on-air work which at first involved just giving station breaks, then newscasts, and finally some DJ work with country music and religious music. I also assisted in the production of spots, religious shows, and ethnic shows. I worked with the office computers helping with program scheduling, billing and the like.

It was a very enjoyable career not only because of the variety of work I did there, but because the staff were all very wonderful people to work with all the way up to

the manager. My work there could consist of another whole interview, but I'll close here for now.

Thanks Tom, for the opportunity to answer those wonderful, pertinent questions.

Now on to the questions submitted by my web site visitors.

Carl N5XE: Are all the QSO's from your home location, and, if so, what about the times you were not at home?

K3WWP: All are from Armstrong county and virtually all the QSO's are from my home. A few were made in 3 QRP ARCI Hoot Owl sprints at portable setups at the QTH of Tom WY3H a couple of miles south of here. Also I operated one CQWW DX contest from my late cousin's QTH a couple miles east of here. I'd say well over 99% are from the shack in my house.

N5XE: Also, hope you never got ill, but if so, how did you handle that?

K3WWP: I did have one period of a few days when I stayed at my late cousin's house (separate from the CQWW DX contest) while recovering from a brief non-serious illness. During those days she drove me, or I drove myself into town to get my daily weather readings and my streak QSO. The weather readings, by the way, are an even longer streak going back to January 1, 1960 although I was helped with that by my mother, aunts, and a friend while I went to college, technical school, and worked in Pittsburgh.

Larry W2LJ: Were there any

ever times that you thought you might not make a contact due to whatever circumstance and that “This might be the end”?

K3WWP: Not really. I only recall one day during a very severe geomagnetic storm that the bands were virtually dead, but late in the afternoon I did manage to make a very minimal, but good QSO. That was probably the closest the streak ever came to ending. Otherwise, it is normally quite easy to make at least one QSO per day because of the efficiency of Morse Code under all conditions.

W2LJ: What was the lowest power you have ever used to make a streak QSO?

K3WWP: I believe you mean of my overall 50,000 QSO's in the streak, and not the first QSO of each day. Probably the second alternative would be 930 mW when working one of our NAQCC sprints or challenges and the first QSO came in one of those events. Overall, it's easier to answer. 50mW in a QSO with KB4GID in AL, and as far as DX, 60mW in a QSO with P49I in Aruba.

W2LJ: If you had to do it all over again, would you do it again? Any changes you would make?

K3WWP: That's an intriguing question, to be sure. To be honest, I don't know. I guess the best way to look at it is to think how I would react if the streak ended today. Would I start another one? Probably not, knowing the extreme commitment it took to keep this one going. As for the changes, definitely not. It would have to

be QRP/CW/simple wire antennas. QRO would be too easy, as would big gain type antennas. And is there any other ham radio mode besides CW? I don't know any.

W2LJ: Any words of advice to someone who might want to emulate you?

K3WWP: One friend of mine (VA3RJ) did emulate me. Oh, there were others also, but let me tell you about him. He did a streak with QRO power, CW, and a simple antenna, but after (I believe) 1,000 days he said it was just too easy and quit. So I would say to get the most satisfaction from such a streak it should be with the same qualifications as mine. Oh, and another friend (N2ESE) started a (QRO/CW) streak the day he got his vanity call (and has made 2 QSO's every day since for 4 years and a couple months as of the end of 2010). I think that's neat. I also must say that I've found that it is not really as hard to do as it sounds. Actually getting the QSO doesn't take up all that much time each day except on a few days now and then. But you must be aware that obviously it does take time away from other things and be prepared for that.

Paul, NØNBD: Hi John, I have been thinking of a question to submit but after following your writings for a while, I come up short. I already know quite a bit of your life, the “streak”, of your fishing, and other activities. I suspect if there were less than a thousand miles between us we could sit in the radio room with a “cup of joe”

and shoot the breeze about a lot of things. So lacking a question, I will ride along and await the interview.

K3WWP: I appreciate your comments, Paul. We've gotten to know each other very well primarily by email, and it would be nice to have a visit some day. I know we would if we lived closer together.

Baltasar, EA8BVP: Do you think to put another wire antennas to compare the results or to get better results in your QRP operation? I don't know if the question is correctly build because of my low English level.

K3WWP: First of all Baltasar, your English is just fine. I really don't have the room on this small lot to actually do any antenna experimenting, and I don't really think I need to because what I have seems to work so well. As the saying goes, “If it ain't broken, don't fix it.” Oh I have fantasized what it would be like to have even better bigger antennas, especially for my contesting work. I know, without meaning to brag, that I am very skilled at contesting, and could do much better with a better equipped station.

Dave, AA7EE: It is to be expected that without using QRO and gain antennas you will not be able to contact every single station you hear. Do you find that there are many stations you call that don't reply to your call, or have you developed something of a sense for who will be able to hear you? In other words, do you have a pretty good idea in advance, whether a station will come back to you or not?

K3WWP: I like to get a lot of my streak QSO's via calling CQ. That way if someone answers me, I'm pretty sure they are copying me well. Also in contests, I can be pretty sure that when I answer a CQ, if there is not a pile-up, I will be answered since contest ops are the best CW ops in the world and have the best receiving equipment. That leaves the situation when I answer someone's CQ outside of a contest. I had never thought about it, but I guess I have pretty much learned over the years who will hear me and who won't. There's no hard and fast rule, but generally if a station is strong here, I should be strong there as well, and a QSO will result. That doesn't always work, of course. He could be listening off frequency and not hear me, or have a very high local noise level, or any number of other factors. The converse is true also. Sometimes I will answer a very weak station not really expecting an answer, but he will come back to me and give me a 579 report or better. On the whole I probably get about a 75% or better response when I call someone outside a contest. If I'm not getting at least a 90% response in contests, I generally QRT and try later since I hate to slow testers down by making them struggle to copy my signals with many repeats. Oh, and incidentally even QRO stations with big antennas can't work everyone they hear.

AA7EE: Do you think you will ever run QRO again?

K3WWP: Actually going by the

definition of QRP at the time, I've run very little QRO. When equipment wasn't all that good, relatively speaking, QRP was defined as 100 watts or less INPUT to the final amplifier. So my 75 watts input then was well within the QRP definition. I don't know offhand just when the definition was changed to 5 watts OUTPUT for QRP, but depending on when that happened, I could have quite a few or even a lot of QRO QSO's with my various powers from 10 to 75 watts I used in the 70's and 80's. However since 1992 when I returned to the air after a period of inactivity, I have been strictly QRP at 5 watts or less output power, and I have no need to ever run more power than that again, unless as one of my web site poll choices says this month — "In an emergency situation". Actually to be completely honest, I have had 3 or 4 QRO QSO's since 1992. A couple just to make sure my TS-570 would work at higher power levels if ever needed in an emergency, and one accidental one on 6 meters when I neglected to set the power to 5 watts for all 3 6 meter segments on my TS-480SAT rig. In case my answer got lost in all that wordiness, NO, I will never run QRO again except possibly in an emergency.

AA7EE: Do you have any interest in other modes, or is it CW all the way for you? Are there any other modes you think you might want to try in the future?

K3WWP: Oh boy, an easy question with no explanation needed. I'm CW only and always will be.

AA7EE: How much longer are you going to continue with the streak?

K3WWP: Until something completely beyond my control brings it to an end. Illness, terrorist attack, total power outage, severe geomagnetic storm lasting a whole day or longer, death, our government outlawing ham radio, etc.

Geoffrey, AE4RV: Did you ever use a bug (in the streak)?

K3WWP: No, I've only used a bug for a very few QSO's back in the 1960's. Now it would take intensive training to use one again as my mind and fingers are solidly trained in the use of a keyer with its automatic dashes versus the manual dashes of a bug. (NOTE: As mentioned above since the interview, I have a bug. Surprisingly to me, I can seamlessly switch between keyer and bug despite the different actions in making dashes. I often use all three types of keys in a single QSO)

Geo, N1EAV: Seeing that there really are no set rules to your streak, would the streak be over if, lets say, you had to have some kind of surgery or something that kept you from your station over a couple days. Or maybe just radio blackout due to conditions. Perhaps something weather related could keep you off the air. There's probably any number of things out of your control that could keep you from making a qso.

K3WWP: I suppose if you consider what the streak means now, and that is a showpiece that demonstrates that CW is an extremely

efficient and still very useful mode even with my very simple setup, there is one answer, while considering it differently, there are other answers. In the first case, if I was completely 100% unable to be on the air some day between 0000Z and 2400Z, that would not disprove in any way how efficient CW is, and shouldn't affect the streak although it obviously should be noted as a gap in the streak. If simply considering the number of consecutive days such a QSO was

greatness of CW.

Ed, KB3SZZ: I would love to know something about your technique for snagging QSOs. Is there a particularly good place to position your call when CQing, relative to other ops?

K3WWP: I've answered that before in one of my Keynote QRP columns, I believe. Briefly, I tend to stray not too far from activity on a ham band. If someone is tuning across a wide empty spot in a band, they may tune very quickly and

That is fine also, if you hear an old friend, new state, rare country, etc. calling CQ. Several of my most memorable QSO's I mentioned in an earlier answer came from CQ's. The VK6HQ QSO's for example. Also it was a thrill to have TA3D from rather rare Turkey answer my 30M CQ one time. It's thrilling to have prominent contesters that I admire like K4BAI and K4LTA for two examples, answer my CQ (outside a contest, I mean). There are many other QSO's I could mention that are more thrilling for me because they answered my minimal QRP CQ.

KB3SZZ: Regarding DX contacts, will operators from other countries avoid slow speed QSOs due to a fear of changing band conditions, or is someone like me just as likely to make a contact as anyone who can copy the call sign and answer their CQ?

K3WWP: We're getting more into everyday operating questions now and straying from the streak, but Ed is a new ham, and we've become friends via email and an on-air QSO, so I'm going to answer this as the last guest question in the interview. I'll still do my best to answer any other questions you may have on any topic in the future though. I believe that the majority of DX operators will work anyone at any speed who calls them. This is true especially in contests and especially near the end of contests when every additional QSO ups their score. Now if a DX station is involved in working a big pile-up, although he

“I find it exciting to never know who I'm going to work in advance.”

made, obviously that would definitely end the streak and a new one would have to be started. When Lou Gehrig couldn't play any longer because of what is now known as “Lou Gehrig's Disease”, his playing streak was over, period.

It's not an easy thing to decide, and as Geo states further on in his email, it would be interesting to see what you, my diary readers think on the matter. You cleared up a different matter about the streak when in a previous mini-poll you told me it would be perfectly OK to make a schedule with someone to continue the streak, even though personally I don't think that is right. Anyone can work a neighbor in town any day he wishes which doesn't prove anything about the

tune right past a weak QRP signal. Whereas if you stay within a few kHz of other activity, tuning rates slow down as that other activity is examined, and it may be easier for your QRP signal to be heard. If a band is totally unoccupied, you don't have that choice. Then I would call CQ near commonly used frequencies like the QRP or FISTS frequencies.

KB3SZZ: Do you usually do a lot more answering of CQs, rather than CQing yourself?

K3WWP: I prefer calling CQ myself when I'm just looking for an ordinary QSO. I find it exciting to never know who I'm going to work in advance. If you answer someone else's CQ, you know who you are working, obviously.

may be willing to answer a slow operator, you can be assured that other ops waiting to work the DX will become impatient. Therefore if you are a slow operator be sure to send your info as briefly as possible. If the exchange is just RST for a DXpedition, just send TU 599 and nothing else. I always believe in being polite, hence the TU. If it's a contest, and the exchange is RST and a serial number send only TU 599 001 or just TU 599 1. You'll gain respect from the DX station and those waiting to work him as well.

John, K3WWP: Now some questions from me to me. Do you think the streak has some importance in ham radio or is it just done for your personal satisfaction and nothing else?

K3WWP: It's always nice to do things to achieve personal satisfaction and to be proud of the accomplishment, but if that's all it were, the streak would have ended long ago. However, in this day and age, many hams are living in housing with limited antenna space or even antenna restrictions, and because of the cramped quarters there is a lot of susceptibility to TVI and RFI. In those situations, about the only alternative many think they have is to lose access to the wonderful hobby of ham radio. I think the streak shows them there is another alternative. I've proven conclusively with the streak that if you use CW, you can still succeed extremely well with QRP and simple wire antennas in those situations. I think making daily QSO's

under those conditions to the tune of 15 years, 50,000+ QSO's, 200+ DX entities, WAS, WAC, 4 zones shy of WAZ, and many certificates in contests has given encouragement to many hams to try ham radio again in their restricted situations. And hey, I guess that does involve a lot of personal satisfaction and pride after all because helping folks in whatever way possible is the bottom line in life.

John, K3WWP: I work or hear in other ways from many hams who are rediscovering the joy of CW. I wonder if the streak contributes to that. What do you think?

K3WWP: I think some may have done so because of the streak showing them how effective CW is and/or because they see how much fun I've had in the streak. However I'm sure the main reason is efforts by two wonderful CW clubs, FISTS and NAQCC that exist to promote the use of CW on the ham bands through their many varied activities. The NAQCC at QRP power levels only, and FISTS at all power levels.

John, K3WWP: When I worked at WPIT, I helped engineer and

sometimes take part in a program called On the Traffic Beat with my good friend Nick Nicklas. When he interviewed someone on his show, many times the final question would be something like this which I ask you now. Is there anything else you would like to add that I haven't covered?

K3WWP: I think everything has been pretty well covered by the excellent questions asked by the several interviewers. But I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who has ever commented on the streak over the 15 years. There has never been anything remotely close to being a negative comment. All either congratulate me, thank me for the encouragement it has given them, ask if I can give them tips to help them succeed as I have, and other such positive matters. The interview has been fun, and I hope we can do it again when the streak reaches 20 years in 2014.

Next column, another streak within the streak like the DX streak mentioned above. Be sure to 'tune in' in the next Keynote. 73 to everyone.



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ARE MORSE CODE CLASSES EXTINCT?

by Bob Grubic, NC6Q • www.nc6q.arrl.net

On April 15, 2010, ten students completed a 13-week course in Morse code offered by the Associated Radio Amateurs of Long Beach. The class was taught Bob Grubic, NC6Q with John Poat, K6MJB, and John Olson, K6RFN assisting. The class used the Chuck Adams, K7QO, Code Course CD distributed by the FISTS organization. It also covered many other CW topics such as Q-signals, pro-signs, standard CW spacing, typical CW QSO structures, and more.

This may have been the only CW class going on in the whole United States. If you know of another one, please let me know.

After the course, several students checked in to the club's Slow Speed CW Practice Net for the first time. One student even got up enough nerve to have his first CW QSO on the air! Congratulations to all! 



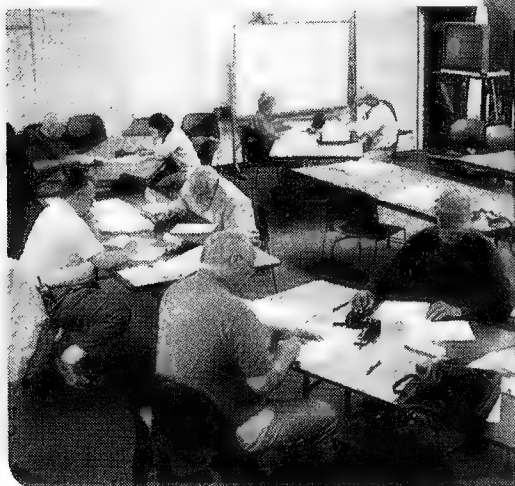
Seen here having completed the 13-week Morse Code Class are:

(l-r) Allan Lauchlan, KB6CWO, Scotty Butler, K6ZNL, Jim Smith, AF6DM, Mat Boarts, AD5GX, Tom Patterson, KE6DFY, Carina Lister, KF6ZYY, Bill Bradley, WD6FON, John Olson, K6RFN, Jack Orr, W6LOH, Ken Lister, KG6TOC

(front row) Bob Grubic, NC6Q, instructor, John Poat, K6MJB, assistant



Students working in pairs "sending & receiving" Morse code from a script.



SELLING FISTS TO A HAM RADIO CLUB

By Terry, W1QF

Proselyte, proselytize v.t. To convert from one belief to another.

Somehow, I let myself get talked into giving the FISTS CW presentation to the Schenectady Amateur Radio Association (NY). Joe, KK5NA, sent me the official slides and some old Keynote copies to hand out. Contact him if you want to do a presentation to your club — kk5na@kk5na.com.

After a little reflection, it dawned on me that this Club's QTH is GE research labs territory, and they probably knew far more than I was going to tell them. The FISTS presentation is pretty basic stuff, and well-suited to general audiences, but this would most likely be an extremely well-informed group, with Suits and PhDs thick upon the floor. As it turned out, they certainly knew their stuff, but they were not the least bit fierce, and everything went well. I was even invited out for ice cream afterwards, so it had to be OK!

The FISTS presentation notes gave good advice 'Don't read the slides — just talk about them!' I knew this after being bored to death at countless seminars at work, but we needed something more. One of my supervisors once gave me a great tip. He said, "Never, never

let them guess what's coming next, or you'll lose them." So with that in mind, I tucked in a couple of extra slides of my own, in places where the FISTS material seemed to pause for breath. The first was a brief history of how S-meters and S-numbers came about, and what the S-numbers imply about transmitter power.

Further on, when QRP and CW were mentioned, I inserted a slide showing that narrow-band QRP CW is roughly the same as 100W SSB in a noisy environment, and this generated a great deal of interest. Many of the 35 or so attendees said that they really had to get out their old keys and dust them off, and it turned out that 4 of them were already FISTS members!

Towards the end, I popped in a slide that quoted from the FCC rules. Here is what it said:

"At all times, an amateur station must use the **minimum** transmitter power necessary to carry out the desired communications."

So, if you get a '20 over 9' signal report, you should not take it as a compliment, not at all!

At one point, I managed to sneak in my favorite quote from Eleanor Roosevelt (except someone told me it was Santayana, so I stand corrected) — "Anything truly

worth having requires hard work". And Morse code certainly qualifies; easy enough if you learn as a teenager, not so easy as a retiree.

What I can tell you now is that the adrenalin rush from holding the attention of 20-30 people for half an hour just can't be beat, you're on Cloud Nine the next day or two, and it's well worth the nervousness before you start (truthfully, everyone is nervous).

The only caveat- you'd better be well-prepared and know the material up front, by going through the slides several times. Even then you'll surely get a question you can't answer. If so, that's easily dealt with — just ask them if anyone can answer it for you!

Someone asked me what FISTS stands for. The consensus was that it doesn't stand for anything, it's just the old slang word for a telegrapher's sending style.

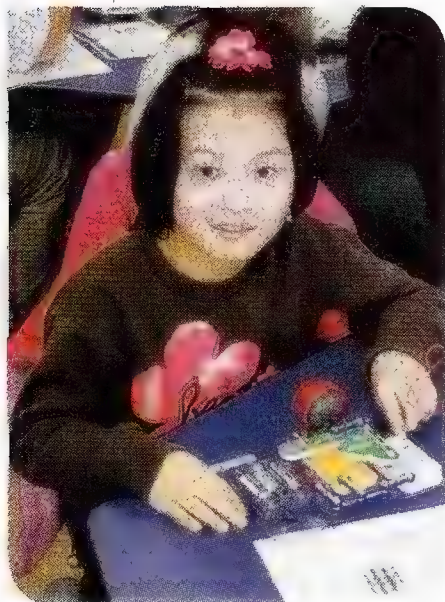
The bottom line is: if I can do it, any ham can. Every radio club president is looking for "stuff" to keep the meetings interesting and the members involved, and this is a perfect way to get more hams to use CW.

Go for it! Proselytize, proselytize!

—73 es 88 de Terry, W1QF 

ARRL KID'S DAY — WITH A TWIST

by Jay Sissom, W9IUF



Happy that her radio works!

Members of the Bloomington Amateur Radio Club and the Indiana University Amateur Radio Club have held ARRL Kid's Day at a local science museum, Wonderlab (<http://www.wonderlab.org>), since the museum's inception in 1998. Each Kid's Day, we would set up an HF radio to let kids communicate with other kids via the radio. For the last 6 years, we have had a radio building session where kids can build their own radio to take home.

On the Air

Even though during this event we used a GAP vertical antenna on top of the building, we were

disappointed because it has been difficult to make contacts. Most contacts that were made, were difficult to hear. The point of the event is that kids can talk to other kids. We've found that an amateur operator would need to interpret because of poor signal strength. Sunspots would really help us, but we aren't able to control them!

This year, we decided to make a change. Instead of using SSB, we used CW. We setup a Morse code practice table where kids can review Morse code and write out their name along with dots and dashes. They practiced sending their name with a code practice oscillator. We had a ham at this table to give them hints on forming



Tom, WB8WOR teaching about AM and FM modulation

the characters properly.

An operator at the HF radio would make contacts with amateurs using CW. During the contact, we asked the other operator if kids could send their names to them and asked that they would send their names back



Some of the kids ready to build their radio.



Testing the volume control.

to them. It was challenging for the other operator to copy the kids at times, but they did a great job.

Kit Building

This year, kids built a Snap Circuits FM radio. This radio is a very easy kit to build and does not require soldering. We have used

this radio for two events and have had very few failures. This event usually sells out in advance, so it is very popular. Before they start building the radio we explain basically how the radio works, then help them build the radio step-by-step.

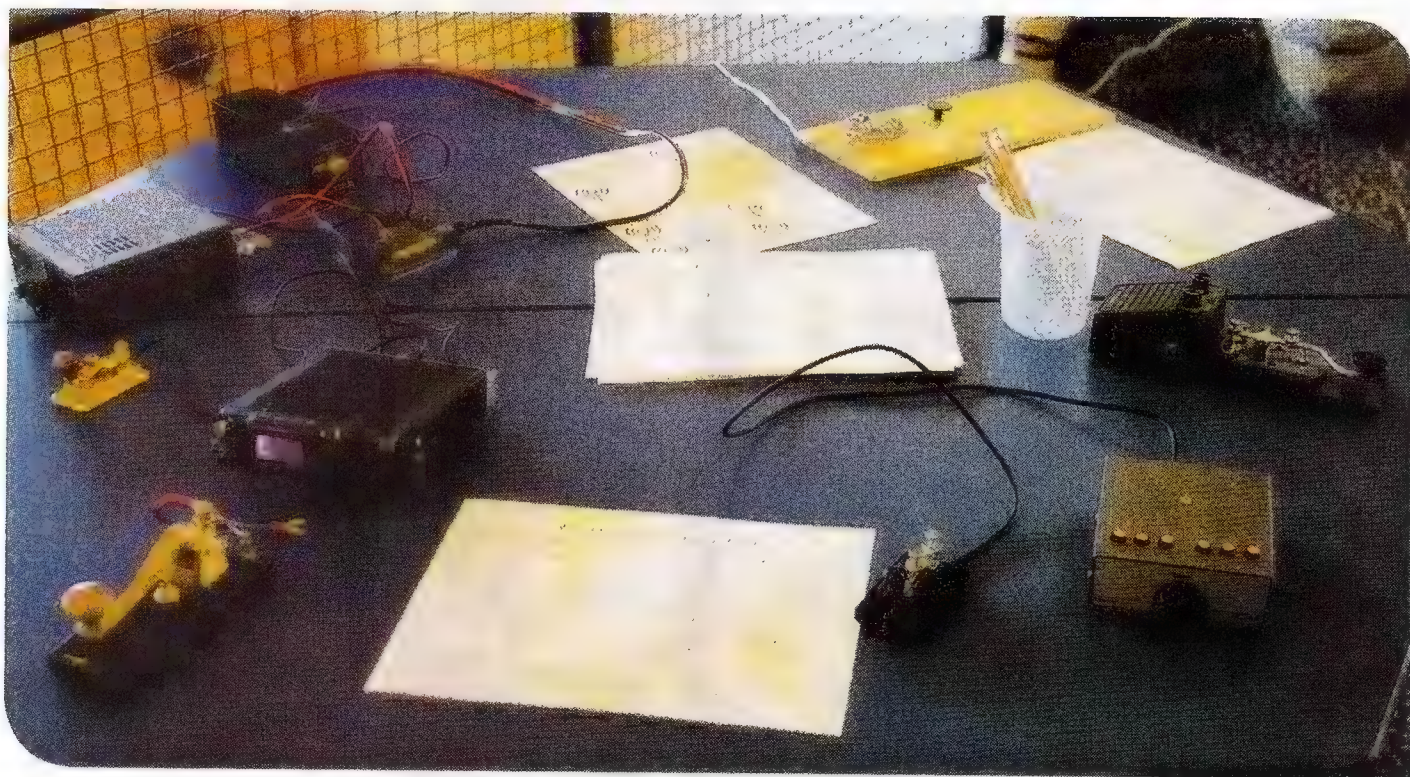
In the past, we had the kids build a crystal radio using a kit that used springs to attach components together. It was very inexpensive and did not require soldering, but unfortunately, we found that many kits were defective. We want each kid to have a working radio to bring home so it was very frustrating to deal with the defective kits and disappointed kids.

We would like to find an affordable regenerative shortwave receiver kit. This would give the kids a taste of HF and let them



Mom is helping Jacob send his name in Morse code on the radio.

learn about propagation and hear stations from around the world. We haven't been able to find a kit



Morse Code Practice Table.



Comparing their new radios.

that was inexpensive and did not require soldering. We are still looking, so if anyone is aware of one, we would be very interested.

Outcome

Overall, our event was successful. We had many happy kids who built their own radio and we had a few kids that were able to send their name with Morse code on the radio. In addition, some parents had fond memories of their parents and grandparents using amateur radio. They were also thrilled when their kids built a working radio. Propagation wasn't our friend and we only made three contacts during the day on 40 meters.



Comparing their new radios.



Writing their name in Morse code.

We also found that the radio room is a very noisy environment because lots of kids and adults are asking questions and talking to each other. This made it challenging to copy and send code. We tried to use the CwGet (<http://www.dxsoft.com/en/products/cwget/>) software to display code on a computer screen that was being received, but the software wasn't very successful at copying the code. It was also confusing to attendees because they thought the computer was copying

everything that was sent and they didn't understand the gibberish that was on the screen at times.

We made contacts with W1BFN, KØFCG and KC4KNN. Perhaps it would be better next time to have a net so we would have hams available when the kids are there. Amateur radio takes patience sometimes and kids don't always have the patience it takes to wait for a contact to be made.

Over the years, we have seen many smiles on kid's faces when



Listening to their new FM radios.

they actually communicate with someone via the radio. Morse code is exciting to the kids. They love to learn a "secret code" that their parents and teachers don't know.

This year, Tom Busch WB8WOR, Matt Pierce N9VKU, Kevin Pauley KB9WVI, Carl Zager KB9RVB and Jay Sissom W9IUF planned and worked at this event. We are very lucky to have a science museum like Wonderlab in our community and we enjoy working with them any time we can.



Al, N1MGC, lives in Maine and woke up to find his antenna wires coated in snow. It was only 4.5" of new snow, but it was heavy and wet. As kids we called

that type of snow "good packing" because it makes the best snowballs for snowball fights. It's pretty, but tough on antennas.

CW: THE DXER'S VALUABLE TOOL

(This article was originally published in the Jan/Feb 2011 issue of DX Magazine)

by Devere "Dee" Logan, WIHEO

"DXing without using CW is akin to becoming a carpenter without knowing how to use a hammer, a doctor without a scalpel, Romeo without Juliet, or a great musician without his instrument."

—Don Karvonen, K8MFO/VS6AA

Morse code has existed since the dawn of the wireless age, and has long been an important part of the top DXer's toolkit. There are solid reasons for this, as we learned from a number of the world's top DX operators. While CW is no longer required for an amateur radio license in several countries, it continues to thrive, advocated by a legion of leading DXers.

So let's take a look at the reasons why CW offers several unique advantages, provided by those who practice and preach the use of Morse code. If you don't currently use CW as part of your DXer's toolkit, this may supply enough reasons why you should.

Morse? of Course!

Samuel Morse, a telegraph pioneer, was granted a patent for his code in 1854. There were drawbacks to his system, however, and eventually it was replaced by the

international or continental code.

Wireless experimenters such as Marconi communicated by Morse code from the beginning. In 1901, it was the letter 'S' that was transmitted between Cornwall, England and Newfoundland. The rigs used were crude high voltage spark gaps to send their "Hertzian Waves," In the years that followed, Morse was the mode used. But when

Reginald Fessenden transmitted the first modulated CW voice signal in 1906, Morse yielded its exclusive role in the emerging world of radio.

CW's Timeless Advantages

There is a beautiful simplicity in Morse code. Merely switching a signal on and off is all that's needed to communicate. A simple switch, touching two wires, using a straight key, a bug, electronic keyer or keyboard provide enough to generate a message.

Sending by hand — with key or paddle — is a skill much prized by DXers declares Gary Bartlett,

VE1RGB: "Everything is sent by hand here or otherwise CW has lost its fun," he says.

DXpeditioner and contestor K8MFO points out that at the ten-

der age of 13 he was a "dyed in the wool CW man." Why? "It didn't take long for a young kid to figure out that he could work a lot of DX on CW with a simple rig, but that was just not possible on phone," he explains.

Despite the relatively simple circuitry of a CW transmitter, the mode also offers advantages in terms of occupied bandwidth and its signal-to-noise ratio. Code speed will affect bandwidth, so a 13 wpm operator may occupy as little as 52 Hz. Let's compare a Morse code signal occupying a modest 500 Hz bandwidth to an SSB signal that may take up 2500 Hz. The noise with the phone mode will be five times stronger than code, or about 7 dB. Advantage: CW.

Distortion and atmospherics don't affect CW, with its simple waveform, as much as phone signals with their more complex waves. Under difficult band conditions, the odds of getting a message understood are much better with a key than a microphone. Another advantage for "Charlie whiskey."

DXers who operate on 160 meters are well aware of the superior qualities of Morse in working weak signals in the Top Band's high-noise environment.

Tim Blank, NØTB, is a CW Honor Roll member who is well acquainted with the challenges of the low bands such as 160 meters. “Anyone that is seriously interested in DXing on the low bands (40/80/160) must accept the fact that CW is the only practical means of making a QSO. The signal-to-noise advantages of this narrow band communication mode are essential on the low bands. Other modes are just not reliable enough,” he states.

Yes, many do operate SSB on the low bands, although they face more challenges than their Morse-operating cousins.

“No doubt under extraordinary conditions SSB can be used, (e.g. WB9Z’s SSB QSO with VU4RG on 160 meters),” admits NØTB. “However openings that provide strong enough signals for this mode are so rare, that building high country totals on the low bands using only SSB is an extremely slow and arduous process.”

More Advantages of CW

Because DXing is an international activity, Morse provides a common “language” that reduces the language barrier. Mike Wetzell, W9RE, a top contester, says, “Non-English-speaking operators seem more comfortable with CW than SSB in some cases. More Europeans operate CW in contests than operate SSB.”

Anyone who monitors the CW portion of the bands will discover (as we have) that many Europe-

ans calling ‘CQ DX’ often fail to receive a call and go QRT. Too bad more of us don’t respond.

Many of these DXers using Morse do appreciate contacts, especially during contests and DXpeditions.

Ann Santos, WA1S, an experienced DXer, confesses that CW is her passion. “Whenever I come back from a DXpedition I receive e-mails and notes from those I worked saying ‘thanks for pulling my weak signal out of the pileup and giving me a new one’.”

Henry Lewis, G3GIQ, emphasizes that while his fist is deteriorating with age, “I would not be without CW. In fact, if I had to make a choice for one mode it would be CW for a number of reasons. Firstly, it is more relaxing — yes, I mean that! Secondly, you get far more bang for your buck on CW. A mediocre antenna and low power will provide far bigger yields. I’m still hooked!”

Fred Laun, K3ZO/HSØZAR, adds: “Having practically grown up with CW since I taught CW to myself at age nine, I have often remarked to friends that there is no more beautiful sound in the world than a 20-meter band full of European CW signals early in the morning.”

The art vs. science of CW

If you’re prepared to add Morse code to your DXer’s toolkit, chances are you’ll encounter a fork in the road. Do you learn the code and develop operating skills? Or do you choose an automated CW tech-

nique with a PC, software and a keyboard? The first requires learning the code, along with some effort and practice. The second depends upon an electromechanical device and a keyboard, but avoids your having to learn the code entirely. But you must type! Score one for the pride and satisfaction of acquiring a valuable new skill vs. relying upon a translating device and your ability to type.

One thing apparent in the comments we’ve received is that there is passion and pride in achieving their CW skills. Listen to Mike Zbrozek, K8XF, a former ship’s radio electronics officer: “Simply stated, a dedicated Morse operator is the best solution to ships message traffic. No computers required, no modems, no fancy communication gear that breaks down all the time. In a maritime environment with all the vibration, humidity, and power fluctuations, CW gear held up for decades.”

VE1RGB agrees: “Three years ago, CW from this station was the only link between VE1NB on a tanker ship in Hudson’s Bay and a sick wife back here in Halifax. No satellite; no SSB; no wireless; no telephone; no nothing except the ship’s HF rig on CW, my HF rig on CW, two sets of paddles and two guys who maintain their CW proficiency through contesting.”

Using automated CW with a computer keying a rig is a very emotional subject among the code crowd. In the opinion of VE1RGB, “It leads to the ruination of a good fist and takes so much of the nec-

essary skill out of the process that I have abandoned all rig keying here,” he says. “Everything is sent by hand here or otherwise CW has lost its fun.”

For those who have tried again and again to master the code, automation may provide a means to an end, enabling them to add CW to their DXing modes. But some users of Morse code readers warn that they aren’t perfect. Some devices can be quite touchy and may be prone to errors. Keep that in mind.

For others who have lost some manual dexterity, K3ZO points out that: “CW is easier to automate and so causes less wear and tear on an old man’s body. It saves the voice and obviates the requirement for liquid voice lubrication.”

So you want to learn CW!

If you’ve decided that your DX operating would take a dramatic boost by using CW, then you’re ready to start up the learning curve. A sincere desire to master Morse is a good starting point.

As the ARRL’s Ham Radio License Manual says: “Many operators enjoy the rhythm and musicality of ‘the code.’ Aside from its utility as a communication protocol, it’s a skill like whistling or painting that you can enjoy for its own sake. Listening to a skilled Morse operator chatting away or relaying messages is quite a treat!”

K8MFO says, “I would encourage anyone who does not know CW to learn it as well as they possibly can. This requires a lot of

practice. Nothing has changed over the years. It took me a bunch of practice to become proficient when I learned the code in 1957.”

There are numerous sources of help and approaches for those who are beginning to learn Morse code. The ARRL has published a book, *Your Introduction to Morse Code*, for starters. Another source of various tools, software etc. is found on the AC6V Website: <http://ac6v.com/morseaids.htm#learn>.

There is no one way to learn CW that will work for everyone. There are a multitude of approaches. The good news is that over the years the techniques and tools for learning have evolved and improved. The old, slow method that sent code characters slowly at only five words per minute has given way to the Farnsworth method that sends characters formed at a higher rate of speed, but with longer spaces between letters. The advantage is that as your speed increases, you don’t have to re-learn the sound of each character.

The FISTS CW Club of the International Morse Preservation Society is a good source of help and support. As George Longden, G3ZQS, the founder emphasizes, “The hallmark of a good operator is the quality of his/her code rather than the speed at which it is sent.” Which leads to the FISTS motto: “Accuracy transcends speed.”

True, many accomplished CW operators do achieve amazing speed. The world speed record was set by Ted McElroy back in 1939 at 75.2 wpm! But most Novices did

very well at only 5 wpm.

The FISTS CW Club offers a variety of items for the Morse crowd, beginners and old timers alike. Its newsletter *The Keynote* includes lots of interesting articles that support its goals of furthering the use of Morse code, engendering friendships among members, and encouraging newcomers to use Morse code. The club sponsors a number awards, on-air events, and various learning tools.

Nancy Kott, WZ8C, who is the club coordinator, points out, “The FISTS code course and upgrade course are a great place to start, and we have them available for \$1.00 per disk to cover the postage and envelope cost. There are two disks of mp3 files: one that starts out with A, B, C, etc. and will take you up to about 20 wpm (the Farnsworth method); the other disk starts about 10 wpm and goes up to about 30 wpm. Both disks contain hours and hours of practice, including a novel as well as text files of hints and encouragement.”

Nancy passes along this tip on improving your code speed: “It boils down to repeating a Morse character until you can recognize it as effortlessly as you can recognize the spoken letter. Having to think, even momentarily, to make the translation from code to letter will bog you down enough to cause you to get behind and trip you up.” She adds, “The rate at which your speed increases and your ability to head-copy will amaze you! That’s when it stops being ‘work’ and starts being fun.”

You can join FISTS for \$15.00 a year. An application can be downloaded from Jim Ranieri, AA9LS, aa9ls@turbotoads.com or send an SASE to him at: 33778 Rebecca Road, Kingston, IL 60145. To join without an application, send your name, call, and mailing address with your membership fee to Nancy, WZ8C. P.O. Box 47, Hadley, MI 48440.

Morse code is alive and well. As Gary, VE1RGB, points out, "I read that in one of the major multi-mode contests in the last couple of years that for the first time in modern history the number of CW logs exceeded the number of SSB logs. I like that!"

Fred, K3ZO, agrees: "If I am not mistaken every one of the (WRTC-2010) competitors made more QSOs on CW during the event than they did on SSB. These are the world's top operators, so that would seem to be a powerful vote in favor of CW."

So if you want to improve your DXing tools, consider adding CW if you haven't done so already. Good luck with developing a good 'fist.'

Our thanks to the experienced CW operators who shared their insights for this article: K8MFO, VE1RGB, N0TB, W9RE, WA1S, G3GIQ, K3ZO, K8XF, and WZ8C.

—Devere "Dee" Logan,
WIHEO, is an active DXer who has used CW for over 45 years. He is FISTS member #11640.



UK FISTS FOUR SEASONS ACTIVITY 2011

(NOT A CONTEST!)

Northern hemisphere seasons!

Winter Season 1st Jan-31st March

Spring Season 1st April-30th June

Summer Season 1st July-30th Sept

Autumn Season 1st Oct-31st December

Bands: HF: 160/80/40/30/20/17/15/12/10m-VHF: 6/2/70cm

Mode: CW

Times: NONE

Score: 1 point per 5minute QSO duration Example: QSO duration 0-4min = 0 point QSO duration 5-9 min = 1 point QSO duration 10-14 min = 2 points FISTS members = Double points Limitations: Not more than a 30 minute QSO - Not more than 90 minutes QSO duration with the same station per month :

Monthly by the 7th to include: DATE, START TIME, END TIME, CALL, BAND, RPRT, NAME,

POINTS Via Email: m0bpt (at) yahoo.co.uk. Excel, CSV, Tabbed word format, Open Office if possible please. Surface mail: R.D.Walker. 87A Whitehall Road, West Bromwich. B700HG., United Kingdom

Power Class A: QRO. - (Up to your countries legal limit. Please be aware of band-plans regarding QRP centres of activity!)

Class B: QRP 5 Watts maximum output from the Transmitter.

General: Each Season is a separate activity, this means that scores are not carried over! Contacts made during other FISTS Activities can be used in the FSA (Four Seasons Activity).

This activity has been designed to be leisurely with contacts being of quality rather than quantity! Entrants are respectfully reminded to match the speed wherever possible of their QSO Partner.

Awards: Seasonal certificates will be awarded to the entrant in each class with the most points after each session. A "GOLD AWARD" Certificate will be awarded to the entrant in each class who has amassed the most points during the activity at the end of the year. Separate awards issued for each chapter of FISTS. i.e. FISTS EU; NA; DU; and EA Endorsed as appropriate.

NOTE: This is a UK activity, so please contact the address above with questions.



FISTS AWARDS

By Dennis K6DF

Here we are, three months into the new year. I certainly hope your beams and wire antennas did not come down because of all the bad weather we've been having. Most have been dealing with very bad snow and ice storms. Out here in the western areas we've been rather lucky in that all we've had is lots of rain and cold with the snow mainly in the mountains.

Cycle 24 has been a rather slow starter but it looks like old sol is starting to get with the program. Of course one good CME does not make a good cycle. I'm hoping that this summer will bring better conditions. It would be nice to make a few skeds with some of my friends across the Atlantic.

Award applications have been slow arriving this year. Things should pick up with better band conditions. . .

You may use the following e-mail address, (fistsawards@fists.org) for sending in your award logs. Excel, Word, Open Office, and Text files are the only file types accepted. Please read the e-mail log rules on the FISTS web site for details.

Send in complete logs for awards.

That means all of the following information; Call, Date of QSO, Band, FISTS Nr., Point/s claimed for each QSO. Incomplete logs will delay receiving your award. Check the FISTS Web Page for additional information regarding current FISTS awards and how to apply for them:

<http://www.fists.org/awards.html>

If you have any questions about the awards that are not answered on the FISTS awards web page, feel free to e-mail your questions to me at... fistsawards@fists.org

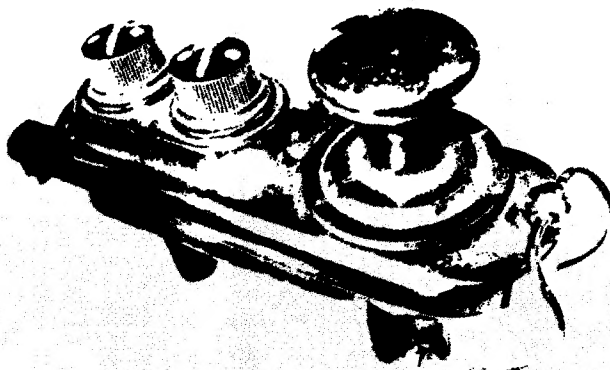
Keep banging the brass . . . C U on the bands . . .

—73, Dennis K6DF



AWARDS ISSUED — Nov 5, 2010 TO Feb 20, 2011

Basic Century (CC) G3ZOD KØSWI MØCYR M6PHL	WAS Award W5VYN	3 Million W4IHI
1 X QRP AD5WI	Novice / Tech K8AAI	6 & 7 Million WB4DAD
Platinum KCØCCR	Veterans K9AAA	15 Million AD5WI
Platinum 500 AD5WI	Millionaire N5XE	16 Million W5GXV



FISTS CW Club Membership Application

If this is a renewal or if you have had a FISTS number before, please check here..... ☐

Call sign: _____ Name on the air: _____

Full name: _____

Mailing address: _____

Email address: _____

(Please print clearly. We do not give out or sell your email address to anyone)

Birthday: _____ Phone: _____

The newsletter is offered on audio cassette to blind members at no charge. If you require this service please check here: ☐

Favorite bands: _____

Other club affiliations (ARRL, QCWA, etc) _____

Other interests: _____

Date: _____ How did you hear about FISTS? _____

Signature: _____

Please make checks (\$15 per year, includes newsletter) payable to FISTS CW Club and mail to:

Nancy Kott WZ8C

PO Box 47

Hadley MI 48440

Also payable via paypal.com to FISTS@TIR.COM

FISTS CW Club
PO Box 47, Hadley MI 48440

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ROYAL OAK, MI 484068

Please note the RENEWAL DATE on your mailing label. Renewals are \$15/year.
Send in your stories and photos for The Keynote!



Top: CMOS Super Keyer II - Winkeyer USB

Bottom: Begali Blade Key - Bencher Paddle -
Begali Magnetic Classic -
Vibroplex Lightning Bug